

Draft

24 September 1954

Memorandum for: Under Secretary of State

Subject: CIA Support For The House Committee
On Communist Aggression In Connection
With Their Interest In Guatemala.

On 28 May 1954 Congressman Kersten called upon the Director in connection with his Committee's proposed trip to Europe. At that time the Congressman stated that he had discussed with the Vice President the possibility that upon its return from Europe the Committee might go into the problem of Communist aggression in Guatemala. He stated that the Vice President had suggested that Mr. Kersten discuss this matter with the DCI. The Chairman stated that Congressman Hillings proposed to leave that night for a few days "vacation" in Mexico City to take a first-hand look at the situation from there. Congressman Hillings did leave for Mexico City and then proceeded on to Guatemala. However, we were not in contact with him at that time and did not render any support for that trip.

On 12 August 1954 Congressman Kersten again called on the Director and proposed certain additional cooperation between

CIA and his Committee, particularly in connection with its ^{interest} ~~support~~ in Central America. Mr. Kersten was informed that a number of documents had been obtained in Guatemala following the downfall of the Arbenz government; ~~and~~ that these documents revealed the nature and extent of Communist penetration in Guatemala; and that they could be made available to him.

On 13 August Congressman Kersten was given two declassified copies of the so-called "gray book" containing about 23 documents, together with a brief covering memorandum explaining something about the documents. He was also shown a representative collection of the atrocity photographs from Guatemala, and Mr. Kersten asked for a collection of these pictures, together with such others as the Red flag flying over the labor headquarters. Congressman Kersten was informed that in reply to his request for advice as to what use they might make of this material that he could regard the material as "bricks and mortar" for the edifice he would construct, and that this material and others we could get for him might save them a lot of time and effort. Congressman Kersten subsequently asked whether he could use this material in the course of speeches he was making, and he was informed that the documents and photographs had been provided to him for such purposes as he wished.

On 14 August, in the presence of a CIA representative, Mr. Kersten informed Congressman Hillings that he would use these documents to "kick off" the investigation.

On 18 August Mr. Kersten informed CIA that it was to consider Congressman Hillings as the man in charge of the Guatemalan operation for the Committee and that we should feel free to contact him, although the Chairman would continue his interest in the work.

On 18 August a representative of CIA contacted Congressman Kersten to explain the nature of the set-up of the Guatemalan Committee (exploiting the documents in Guatemala), and told him of the hopes for finding considerable documentation which would be helpful. It was agreed that ~~was~~ releasing many of these documents through the Kersten Committee would be of benefit in getting the material out/ⁱⁿ of the United States without tying the United States Government ~~too~~ too closely to the Guatemalan affair.

In accordance with Congressman Kersten's request that we now also pass substantive material to Congressman Hillings and upon Congressman Hillings' request to CIA, Mr. Pforzheimer met with Mr. Hillings on 19 August and he ~~was~~ outlined his plans for his forthcoming trip to Guatemala and requested that he start

immediately to begin reading such background material as CIA could supply.

On 24 August CIA made available to Congressman Hillings the following documents for his personal briefing and retention without attribution to source:

- A. "Documents Obtained In a Brief, Preliminary Sampling of the Documentary Evidence of Communist Infiltration and Influence in Guatemala";
- B. "Nature and Extent of Communist Infiltration and Control of the Guatemalan Government and Governmental Agencies";
- C. "Strength and Significance of the Castillo Armas 'Invasion' of Guatemala";
- D. "Guatemalan Subversive Actions Against Neighboring States";
- E. "The Advance of International Communism in Guatemala, February 1954";
- F. State Department White Paper on Guatemala;
- G. News Highlights, Guatemalan Issues No. 1, 2, 3.

Mr. Hillings was informed of the workings of the Guatemalan Committee and that they would be ready to assist him during his trip.

On 25 August representatives of CIA called on Chairman Kersten and informed him ^{what} ~~what~~ steps had been taken and what additional documentary material was coming in. At his request that he be sent a selection of this documentation from time to time, we have subsequently sent Chairman Kersten two different sets of documents, numbering about ten in each set, which appeared to be of greatest value.

On 30 August Congressman Hillings was ~~xxx~~ given a substantive briefing at CIA concerning the general political situation in Guatemala and ~~x~~ other countries of Central and South America, with emphasis on the Communist threat. He was also informed of

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should be emphasized, however, that Congressman Hillings has not received any CIA operational information concerning Guatemala.

During his stay in Guatemala in early September, Mr. Hillings was shown the available documentation. He has brought

approximately three sacks full back with him for Committee purposes. A CIA representative accompanied him as a translator in his interview with President Armas.

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On 18 September Congressman Hillings briefed Mr. Pforzheimer on what he accomplished during his trip and what he proposed to do in the way of hearings. He requested our assistance in contacting a prospective witness in Guatemala and making arrangements for his transportation to Washington. This has been done. He stated that he might need assistance in connection with the translation of documents, and ~~later~~ we have informed his office that we had certain documents already translated, and that if his office could inform us as to the identification of the documents which they wished to use during the hearings we would make available such translations as we had. His office stated that they thought the Library of Congress was handling the translation problem and have not been in further contact with us on this point.